

*facts about*

# boating safety classes



STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
THE RESOURCES AGENCY  
DEPARTMENT OF BOATING AND WATERWAYS

Gray Davis, Governor

Mary D. Nichols  
Secretary for Resources

Raynor Tsuneyoshi, Director  
Department of Boating & Waterways

## Who

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Boating safety classes are conducted by several organizations throughout California. The largest of these organizations are the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary and the United States Power Squadrons. A primary objective of both organizations is to promote safety afloat through education. You need not be a member or own a boat to take advantage of the basic instruction offered. Other organizations offering boating and water safety classes include the American Red Cross, YMCA, Scouting groups, and local parks and recreation departments.

The Department of Boating and Waterways offers a home study course boaters can take at their own pace. Each booklet covers all the federal and state laws and rules of the road, and provides two exam answer cards to be completed and returned to the Department for grading. Those who successfully complete the course are awarded a certificate of completion which is recognized by many insurance companies for discounts on boat insurance policy premiums.

## What

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Introductory boating courses, available to nonmembers, are provided by the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Power Squadrons. The Coast Guard Auxiliary offers two basic classes: Boating Skills and Seamanship for powerboaters and Sailing and Seamanship for sailors. The Power Squadrons class is developed for both power and sail boaters. All three courses include instruction on aids to navigation, rules of the road, charts and compasses, boating regulations, marlinspike seamanship, and boat handling. In addition, some Coast Guard Auxiliary flotillas offer courses on coastal piloting to nonmembers.

Both the Power Squadrons and the Coast Guard Auxiliary charge a nominal fee for classroom materials. Students will be informed if there are any additional charges, such as a room fee.

## When

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Generally speaking, both the Power Squadrons and the Coast Guard Auxiliary conduct classes at least twice a year. The first classes start in January or early February. The second group begins in fall, shortly after the termination of school vacation. In some areas, classes are conducted on a continual basis. City agencies hold most of their classes during summer.

## Where

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With few exceptions, boating classes are conducted close to most urban areas. Some large cities may have several squadrons or flotillas allowing a wider choice of class times and locations. Several units offer classes in inland areas. In many instances, if a group of individuals makes a request, classes can be arranged to suit the group. Classes offered by city agencies are conducted at predetermined locations, convenient for local residents.

## Why

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Most California boating fatalities result from capsizing and falls overboard because of operator error, including inattention, carelessness, improper lookout, or excessive boating speed. Additional causative factors include weather conditions, loading problems, insufficient training and experience, and operating the wrong craft for given water conditions—an 11-foot open boat does not belong in high surf!

Many boat insurance companies offer discounts for graduates of Power Squadrons and Coast Guard Auxiliary classes. Boating safety education is encouraged for the entire family.

## How

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You can access both the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and the U.S. Power Squadron Websites from the Department of Boating and Waterways' Website, at [www.dbw.ca.gov](http://www.dbw.ca.gov).

Boating and Waterways also maintains a tollfree boating safety information telephone line, (800) 869-SAIL. Callers can inquire about boating safety classes in their area, as well as other boating safety information.

Boating safety class information is also available by directly contacting the Coast Guard Auxiliary or Power Squadrons.

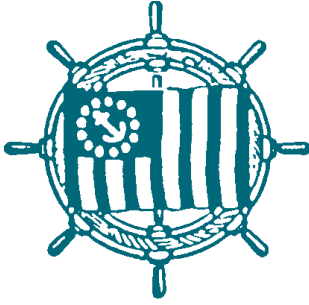
### U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

- Northern California  
(510) 437-3308

- Southern California  
(619) 260-1515 (Recording-San Diego Area)

### U.S. Power Squadrons

- Northern and Southern California  
(309) SEA-SKIL (732-7545)



Founded in 1914, the United States Power Squadrons is a private, nonprofit, and non-military boating organization dedicated to boating education. Members number 60,000 in more than 450 squadrons located throughout the country and overseas. The objectives of the Power Squadrons include promoting powerboating and sailing and encouraging a high standard of skill in the handling and navigation of vessels. The organization's principal public contributions include its boating course and its cooperative charting program, which provides additions and corrections for nautical charts.



The Coast Guard Auxiliary is a civilian, volunteer arm of the regular Coast Guard created by an Act of Congress in 1939 to "promote safety and effect rescues on and over the high seas and on navigable waters; to promote efficiency in the operation of motorboats and yachts; to foster a wider knowledge of, and better compliance with, the laws, rules and regulations governing the operation of motorboats and yachts; and to facilitate other operations of the Coast Guard." The Coast Guard Auxiliary today is the only civilian boating organization with such official recognition.

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